

# COUNTER INFORMATION

NUMBER 12 OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 1986.

## BARRICADES IN DENMARK



Copenhagen, September - over 200 squatters have erected a dozen barricades in defence of a block of flats they have lived in for 3½ years. Police moved in to enforce a court eviction order but were successfully driven back with molotovs, bricks, sticks, teargas etc. [yes - the squatters used teargas against the pigs!]

The inhabitants in the area are helped with their daily chores [shopping etc.] by the squatters, so life goes on in the warzone! The squatters keep a constant look-out for police on the barricades, while people from all over Copenhagen bring food, hot coffee and blankets.

Some do-gooders including a well known Danish pop star want to buy the house then sell it to the council.

The squatters say they don't want to be given the house; they want the council to own it while they themselves will use it and pay repairs, water,

gas etc. This, they hope, will emphasise the council's responsibility for the catastrophic housing situation.

The left wing parties want to avoid bloodshed [the 'poor bewildered youth' type thing], the conservatives want to join the leftwingers decision to embarrass the social-democrats - who now own the house.

Sympathy actions have been carried out in Holland, Germany and Sweden. In the second biggest town in Denmark, Aarhus, the social democratic housing organisation [the one evicting] was completely smashed up with damages of over £15,000!!

STOP PRESS: Negotiations ended with the squatters finally moving out and stopping resistance if the major house was converted into a youth centre and communications centre with free doss-rooms.

Needless to say, as soon as the police got into the "No-Go Area", the government and the house owners reverted to their original

Sectarianism fosters the idea that one sect of people have a "divine" right to rule over another sect.

In N. Ireland this has led to catholics being subjugated by "Protestant Asendency". Through centuries of suppression by the British state and anti-catholic work practices, catholics now have been put into ghettos where there is no work and housing is very poor. In these ghettos they are easy targets for the RUC (N Ireland Police) and the Army.

These state thugs use live bullets, plastic bullets, super-grasses, and surveillance - under the disguise of anti-terrorism - to keep the centuries old oppression alive and the population divided.

It is in these circumstances that the present crisis in N.Ireland has arisen. After, it seemed Paisley, Robinson & Co. were worried their power was being eroded by the Anglo-Irish agreement.

The UVF (*Ulster Volunteer Force*) and the UDA (*Ulster Defence Association*) under the cover of front organisations such as the *Protestant Action Force* and the *Ulster Freedom Fighters* have also taken it upon themselves to terrorise the catholic community again.

They have killed, beaten and burnt people out of their homes in an effort to move catholics out of "Protestant" areas.

### NOT A CLASS REACTION

In response to these sectarian attacks the *Catholic Reaction Force* (not to be left out of things) placed a bomb in a Protestant owned pub (it was defused) and also kidnapped a Protestant building worker - who was later released due to pressure from local people in Derry (both Protestant and Catholic).

It is with all this as background that staff at Lisburn DHSS Office walked out in support of threatened Catholic workmates (who had been threatened by the UDA).

The next day 12 offices were closed and 2,000 workers - Protestant, Catholic, and those of no religion - stood together. The next day 14 offices were closed!

In another incident bin workers refused to collect rubbish in a Catholic area after four Protestant bin workers had been ordered off the Estate by a gang with sticks. The bin workers said that the rubbish would only be collated once intimidation had stopped.

These are only a couple of isolated incidents, but here we have seen that friends and workers have been able to tell the hate mongers that they will not be intimidated by sectarian threats and are prepared to take action to show it.

renovation plans, tearing up their agreement with the squatters within hours of it being signed.

A spokesperson for the squatters organisation said "We've never trusted the capitalists, but we thought the government would keep to its legally-binding Contract. They only negotiated at first because we used force. Now we know we can't trust the state or politicians of the left, right or centre. We know now that without violent resistance you get nowhere."

### PLASTIC DEATH

Consider the fact that the plastic bullets you make have killed 16 people in Northern Ireland - that was the appeal made to BROCKS factory workers in Sanquhar on October 6th.

Relatives of the victims of plastic bullets organised an hour long picket and leafleting of the Dumfriesshire factory. Participants included miners from Durham.





### THE SUN NEVER SHINES ANYMORE

By rejecting Murdoch's latest offer the sacked News International strikers signal their determination to fight on for full reinstatement and entry into the Wapping print plant.

But to win the strike's isolation must be broken. The Union leaders have been negotiating defeats all over Fleet Street. Now Maxwell is again attacking the Mirror workers. Simultaneous action, united across several papers, is urgently needed.

The Union leaders are enemies. SOGAT recommended the latest sell-out and has issued instructions for-

bidding effective picketing. But many pickets see the need to break the state laws and union rules designed to keep workers down. Frequent attacks are made on the TNT vehicles distributing the Sun, etc. Picketing has persuaded shops in Snodland, Kent not to stock Murdoch's muck.

On 18th Sept. 200 pickets attacked a TNT depot in Byfleet, Surrey. Police and TNT vehicles came under fire from petrol bombs, bricks and nails.

Contact Picket C O House-mans, 5 Caledonian Road, London, N1 9DX.

### MINERS RESIST

The Coal Board are still pushing through massive redundancies, but in some areas resistance is developing.

Discontent has several focuses. 468 miners remain sacked after the year long strike. Currently the Board are refusing to backdate the wage award to miners who struck in 84/85. Local managements are often acting like dictators.

On Oct. 9th Scargill called for no more strikes over pay till negotiations with Haslam the following week. However its actions not words that will force the Board to back down.

DURHAM. Following 9,000 redundancies since March '85, a fightback has now started. In mid Sept. 3,000 mining mechanics voted for a series of lightning one day strikes. Strikes will hit one pit and one workshop every week till 4 demands are won - reinstatement of all sacked miners; payment of the back-dated wages; Seaham Colliery to stay open; restoration of the conciliation machinery.

The first strike was at Murton on 22nd Sept. Together with the Second Day of Action in the campaign it was a resounding success. All but a dozen of the 2,200 miners at Westhoe Pit struck on 7th October. And, the 8,000 strong Durham Miners Association have voted to back up this campaign with a mid-week overtime ban.

#### YORKSHIRE

Some pits, like Askern, are banning overtime over the pay grievance and for the reinstatement of sacked miners and the early release of those in jail.

## NO TURNING BACK

Mass protests have escalated in the wake of the mine disaster at the Kinross Gold Mine in East Transvaal which killed 182 miners. Following the successful disruption of the Companies 'memorial service', the mineworkers held their own tribute to their comrades killed underground in the hazardous conditions.

The loss of life continues to be horrific in pursuit of profits. In 1983, 604 miners were killed in the Gold Mines and 539 in 1984. "A Thousand Ways to Die" is a new safety manual forwarded by the N.U.M. and ironically distributed shortly before the Kinross Mine Disaster.

Over 2 weeks later and a national stoppage of 300,000 mineworkers closed the majority of gold and coal mines on the 1st of October. Such is the depth of solidarity amongst most black workers, others such as those on the oil industry struck in support. As even *I.T.N. News* observed: "A year or so ago, such action would be unthinkable". This, amid the continued Emergency clampdown on township and workplace activists which have involved 7,000 detentions, with the accustomed State brutality and torture long associated with the Apartheid State.

In 1981, it was Poland where the Stalinist State turned to a military junta to destroy the organised strength of workers. This by and large succeeded because the State exploited the vacillating attitude of *Solidarnosc* spokesman like Lech Walesa. In South Africa, the likelihood of revolt being defused is much less likely.

To make the apartheid regime ungovernable is the prime objective of the township and workers resistance. The arrest of leading activists and localised repression has been countered by the generalisation of self-activity and the network of street and work committees which can survive the detention of leaders and spokespersons. Past issues of *COUNTER-INFORMATION* have highlighted this in Mamelodi near Pretoria for example. We have also focussed on the unrest in the schools. Despite the continued black-out of news, there is considerable evidence that 'normality' is far from restored. In Soweto, scene of the recent battles arising from the mass boycott of rents, 20 schools have been closed until the end of 1986 because of the success of the stayaway by school students.

Illusions in the peaceful sharing of power are rapidly disappearing. The reform option which included businessmen meeting the A.N.C. Leadership in Zambia has been rejected by the Apartheid Regime. Instead, the prospects are for a long drawn out war of liberation, in the township, schools and workplaces where the capitalist system increasingly is challenged together with its racist expression in South Africa.

Hatfield Main struck on 26th Aug. and 3rd Oct. against the victimisation of the sacked men. And, the Hatfield miners are pushing for joint rail-dockers-miners action to stop the import of South African coal at Gunners Wharf on the Trent, in solidarity with S. African miners.

A management clamp down at Selby has been resisted by a series of wildcat strikes. In mid-September a week long strike at Stillingfleet nearly spread across the whole Selby coalfield: management backed down under the threat.

Markham Main, Armthorpe and Prince of Wales collieries have also had recent strikes.

#### FIGHT OR DIE

In South Wales [7,500 redundancies since March '85] miners have banned overtime since early August to get the back wages owed.

In Scotland however NUM leaders have called for "a positive attitude" to an agreement to cut the workforce to 4,000 - compared to 14,000 in March '84.

Kent miners in Betteshanger are continuing to call for solidarity with Terry French, serving four years in Ford Open Prison, W. Sussex.

In March 1987 miners' redundancy payments are to be cut drastically. The choice facing mining communities - 'fight or die' - will be even more stark. 18th Oct. 1986. Coal Board attempt to buy off strikes by linking payment of backdated wages to the forfeiting of Pension contributions in any future strikes.



## NO CONTAINING SPANISH DOCKERS

Spanish dockers continue to strike in protest at the Government's plans to privatise the docks and reduce the workforce by 5,000. The dockers are organised through their union, the *Co-ordinara*, which is independent of the Socialist U.G.T. and the communist C.C.O.O. (2 main T.U. federations). The *Co-ordinara* is organised through regularly convened General Assemblies and has no full time officers. Throughout the strike a private firm, Contenemar has been operating in the docks using scab labour in spite of its being illegal, with full government backing.

15th September - hundreds of Barcelona dockers chase scabs on to a cargo ship and throw some of them overboard.

16 September - dockers demonstrate outside a national store appealing to the management to stop using the services of Contenemar.

17 September - the Government threaten the store's H.Q. and force them to continue using *Contenemar*.

In *Cadiz*, dockers smashed the windows of the local (ruling) Socialist party offices.

The Government are now trying to have the dockers strike made illegal. In spite of this the dockers' morale is high and they are determined to win their struggle.

## ANDALUCIA

On September 5, *Diego Canamero*, a member of S.O.C. - the landless workers union, was imprisoned for 30 days for participating in an occupation of a farm in 1984. His sentence could be extended to 46 days if he refuses to pay the accompanying heavy fine. In retaliation, S.O.C. members occupied 20 town halls in Andalucia. Hundreds travelled to Madrid to demonstrate against the Prime Minister and hunger strikes have also taken place.

# RIOTS GO WEST

## PLYMOUTH

The Devon and Cornwall Constabulary are undermanned compared to other areas. To provide an excuse for increased resources they have started more provocative policing in likely flashpoints. In the nightclub area of Union Street Plymouth locals responded.

On August 2nd, 8 police were injured in clashes, this included a pitched battle in Union Street. At about the same time 2 police were injured when a gang stormed Dartmouth cop shop.

Events boiled over during the weekend 8-10th Aug. As clubs closed a riot started. 500 people blocked Union St. and showered the police with stones and glasses. A panda was turned over and police assaulted. People were walking right up to police and hurling spit and abuse. The battle lasted nearly two hours.

Plymouth's police H.Q. was closed as 100 cops rushed to the scene. Reinforcements were drafted in from Torbay, Exeter, Launceston and Cornwall to cover the suburbs. 22 people were arrested.

Evidence that the riot was provoked comes from a military cop who stated "The whole incident is a ploy... to obtain more police for the area."

## BRISTOL

Using the excuse of a drugs raid 600 police invaded St. Paul's, Bristol on the evening of Thursday Sept. 11th. After the raid they remained to harass locals. They were attacked with bricks and petrol bombs until the early hours. Rioters spread to outlying middle class areas. Shops were looted, cars smashed and two reporters [one from the Sun] were hospitalised. Eight cops were injured, one seriously.

Over seventy people were arrested. Youths and women were systematically strip searched in the presence of male P.C.'s. Of the 16 charged on Friday morning only two were for drug offences involving tiny amounts of cannabis.

Later that day more rioting erupted. This time better organised. Rioters avoided set pieces with the fuzz and circled round to attack from



On 12th June non-unionised, mainly immigrant, women workers started a 7 month long strike against the *Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce*. The Bank has 75 billion dollars in assets and 1,500 branches.

The women had received no basic pay rise for 5 years and were frequently sexually harassed by supervisors. When the bank ignored complaints 250 women walked out.

The strike was sustained by novel tactics which may provide an inspiration for others. They created an automatic redialling system which flooded the bank's switchboard with up to 50,000 calls a day. Each gave a recorded message of the strikers demands or a high pitched whistle.

## BANK - A - THON

Another tactic was the "Bank -

a - thon". Using an account at the bank, supporters choked up the tills at peak times by paying in one cent deposits. In the chaos the strikers sang their theme song "Bank Busters" and handed out "Marie Antoinette Cake" to customers. The bank closed the account after 1,800 deposits.

On another occasion strikers showered the bank's central hall with a confetti storm of deposit slips while they handed customers leaflets containing their demands. In December customers were serenaded with carols outlining their case.

The bad press and business disruption forced the bank to consider negotiations. However, the *Canadian Labour Relations Board* stepped in and on 28th January enforced a new employment contract. It accepted only some of the women's demands and lasts for a year.

## SILENTNIGHT

The *Silentnight* workers are now well into the second year of strike action. The dispute started at the two bedding factories at Sutton, Yorks., and Barnoldswick, Lanes.

behind. Again surrounding middle class areas were looted spreading police manpower. The dole office was firebombed. 999 calls were used to lure cops. Lamps were smashed and burning barricades set up. Women were at the forefront of the fighting, non-combatants helped with petrol bombs etc. Info - Bristol Class War

## CARDIFF

At around 9.40 p.m. on 28th Aug. police followed a suspected stolen car into the Bute-town area of Cardiff's dockland. Their attempt to arrest the two occupants was stopped by 70 youths. The law were attacked and called for reinforcements.

In the following 3½ hour battle, barricades were erected and a car set ablaze. Four pandas and a transit van were badly damaged. Cops were forced to shelter from a hail of missiles behind a fire engine. Fire officers were treated for injuries including a fractured nose.

when boss Tom Clarke sacked 52 workers.

Country-wide strikers and supporters are picketing shops selling Silentnight beds. The "caring" Co-op sells 30% of the scab-made products.

At Selby Co-op, N.Yorks. workers in *USDAW* have refused to handle the beds. The Co-op at High Wycombe, Bucks. has cancelled its order for Silentnight products. The Fameo shop in Huddersfield, owned by Clarke's son has shut down after picketing.

The strikers realise their fight is part of a wider struggle and have joined the picket lines at Wapping, and at Morris Glasgow.

The actions against the Co-op and other outlets need to be stepped up everywhere. Such long running strikes only stand a chance, in the present climate, if they get nationwide solidarity.

Donations (cash and postal orders - not cheques) to Mrs Ann King, 10 Rainhill Cres., Barnoldswick, Colne, Lanes.

Silentnight boss Tom Clarke sponsored a N.Yorks. police speedboat for a police charities event - the boat, with Silentnight logo across it, SANK.....



# Resistance Worldwide

## ITALY:

### WORKERS AGAINST NUCLEAR POWER

Anti-nuclear actions took place this summer in Italy. Three anti-nuclear camp sites were organised beside nuclear power stations in the north & in central Italy.

On 6th August at *Montalto di Castro*, workers who refused to enter the nuclear site were attacked by police as they entered into discussions with demonstrators. Subsequently, the workers started to organise strikes and leafleting themselves, visiting the nearby camp to discuss with the protestors. On 9th August the big demonstration was joined by workers and citizens from nearby villages.

In *Puglia* in the south, popular protests forced the council to order that work at a local nuclear station should be stopped.

*Autonomist, Rome.*

## OPPOSITION IN THE WORKERS STATE

If a worker is unemployed for three months, he or she is sent to the camps and joins the enormous number of slaves. This is the law on "social parasitism": there are close on 3 million individuals currently in the camps, forming an unpaid and compulsory workforce. The majority of these 3 million are workers who, having lost their jobs, couldn't find another within three months.

The others are people who went to a city without the right to live there. There's the obligation to be registered: for example, if you live in Moscow you must be registered with the militia, and if you go to another town, you can remain there only three days. Otherwise you're returned to your town of origin or just locked up. So workers are truly attached to their place of work, since there's no reason in the world why they can leave it, even if the wages are pitiful.

As you'll appreciate, the workers have a lot to protest about. Their situation is difficult and only one thing shuts them up: fear. But when the will to demonstrate their rejection and discontent becomes stronger than fear, they take other steps. What finally irritates workers is that

### PROPAGANDA ATTACKED

The pornography industry is Big Business which uses womens bodies for power and profit. Pornography is not a celebration of sexual freedom but women hating propoganda which promotes the rape and terrorism of women and girls. Women everywhere are taking direct action against the men who sell or consume this

there's nothing in the shops.... That shows when discontent finally gets the upper hand, when the worker loses fear, he starts - alone or with others - a strike. He organises demonstrations and that is always called spontaneous.....

From time to time we receive echoes of a strike [generally very quickly repressed] or demonstrations [but rarely] and what we hear about is but a small part of what's really happening. But it must be known that there are strikes in the Soviet Union. Examples in the last decade include 200,000 workers in Gorki in May 1980 against meat and milk shortages, during which 2,000 hand-written leaflets were circulated, and in May 1980 at Togliattigrad of bus drivers which laid off 170,000 Lada factory workers. And there's another form of

contempt for women called pornography.

### S.L.A.G.S.

The Sisters of Luton Anarchist Group took *W.H. Smiths* by surprise on 9th August.

Pornographic magazines were removed from the shelves and thrown into a dustbin liner smeared with oil and margarine. The manager ordered his staff to return the magazines only to find they had all been completely ruined and had to be thrown away.

The same day a 'sex shop' in Luton was stormed and the contents pulled off the shelves and onto the floor in full view of the shop assistant.

This is part of a continuing campaign against the sale of pornography, further actions are planned!

workers protest: that's "doing in" the foreman. Generally the worker in trouble doesn't do it himself, but, one evening when the foreman passes some dark corner.....

There is also active sabotage: for example, when I was in the Soviet Union, a whole wood depot was burned down. I also recall the town of Igarka in Siberia which was set on fire [there was arson in a dozen different places in the town.] Often too, the pay which you're given in the factories corresponds not to the number of hours worked but to a quantity produced, and in the "piecework" system there's a kind of passive sabotage for struggling against low rates and high norms.

I've heard of a form of protest in the Tashkent tractor factory [and it's not a form of protest

but of working!] The situation is that of a worker on a line assembling tractors onto which enormous screws must be screwed. Now, it has to be done with an unrealisable speed. So workers have found a way to do it very quickly and efficiently: they dunk the screw into a bucket of Epoxy resin and bang it on with a hammer. The bolts go on o.k., but it's impossible to get them off when servicing the tractor! And with this kind of petty-sabotage or less conscientious work scattered throughout the country, you can imagine what quality the products are..... It's not really a form of protest, it's just done because there's no other way: it's necessary to meet the targets..

From an interview with Vladimir Borrisov on Radio Libertaire, Paris; translated from *Le Monde Libertaire*.

Counter Information wants to spread knowledge of resistance to oppression in all aspects of life. We encourage this resistance to aim for the complete overthrow of all relations of domination and submission, including the class system, the oppression of women and the many other existing aspects of oppression and exploitation. The world's resources should be controlled by all its people and used to satisfy human needs.

We encourage correspondents to send us reports. Sometimes these articles may not be in complete harmony with our revolutionary ideas. For example, we stress the importance of people directly controlling their struggles. Thus in workplace struggles we emphasise how Trade Unions prevent this grass-roots control and how they inhibit the development of generalised class struggle against all forms of exploitation. We would also stress the importance of not merely replacing one set of rulers by another, as has happened in the 'Communist' Party-ruled regimes, and as national liberation movements aim for.

At present Counter Information is produced by people in Central Scotland. We would like to encourage the widest possible participation in the project, and we wish to co-operate with all who share our aims.

The more material we receive, the more able we will be to produce the broadsheet regularly and ensure its distribution as widely as possible. Donations towards costs are much needed and very welcome. We encourage all those who want information and/or bundles of the broadsheet to distribute to contact us.

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